DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 190 955 CG 014 602

AUTHOR Steinberg, Jill A.
TITLE Climbing the Ladder of Success--In Highheels: Backgrounds of Professional Women.
PUB DATE 16 Nov 79
NOTE 41p.: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Psychological Association (60th, Honolulu, HI, May 5-9, 1980). Best copy available.
AVAILABLE FROM San Jose State University, Counseling Center-Adm. 201, San Jose, CA 95192

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Choice: *Career Development: Comparative Analysis: *Employed Women: Employment Patterns: *Females: *Parent Background: *Professional Occupations: Sex Stereotypes

ABSTRACT

Research on women's career development documents that, relative to men, few women obtain high professional status and that those who do are often treated as "deviants" from culturally expected female roles, particularly if their careers are in professions traditionally occupied by men. The relation between various background variables and the status of women in five different professions was examined by using mailed questionnaires, telephone interviews and face-to-face interviews to survey 309 women physicians, lawyers, nurses, home economists and homemakers about their parental and present family, educational experiences, employment history, hobbies and other variables. Contrary to expectations raised by previous research, there were no consistent patterns of differences between women who pursued traditional careers (nursing and home economics) and those who were in non-traditional careers (physicians and lawyers). Professional women did not differ systematically from homemakers: most of the women seemed satisfied to integrate their careers with normative women's roles of wife, mother and homemaker. There were differences in the family, educational, and employment history of the women when comparisons were made among the five professional groups instead of the traditional, non-traditional and homemaking career categories. (Author/HLM)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED190955

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

# Climbing the Ladder of Success--In Highheels: Backgrounds of Professional Women

Jill A. Steinberg, Ph.D.

November 16, 1979

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Jill A. Steinberg

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

This article is based on the author's doctoral dissertation completed at the Ohio State University in Columbus under the direction of Jaques Kaswan.

Requests for reprints should be sent to Jill A. Steinberg San Jose State Univerisity, Counseling Center-Adm. 201, San Jose CA 95192.

CG 014602

Running head: Climbing the Ladder of Success

# Climbing the Ladder of Success--In Highheels

## Backgrounds of Professional Women

This study examines the relationships between various background variables and the achievement of professional status by women. The research literature discussing women's career development documents that, relative to men, few women obtain high professional status and that those who do are often treated as "deviants" from culturally expected female roles, especially if their careers are in professions traditionally occupied by men (Wolman, 1975; Steinberg, 1976; Epstein, 1971; Osipow, 1975). In recent years more women have demonstrated their aspirations for high status careers. This study intends to provoke a better understanding of the social, personal and economic variables which influence women's career development. It examines possible differences in the backgrounds and current lifestyles of three groups of women: those who are full-time homemakers; those who are engaged in traditional women's careers such as nursing and home economics; and those who are in professions dominated by men such as medicine and law.[1]

The literature indicates that women's aspirations for non-traditional careers are correlated with several factors: a) <u>family background variables</u>: presence of an employed mother (Lozoff, 1974; Helson, 1972; Hoffman, 1972; Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Tangri, 1972; Lovett, 1969; Ginzberg, 1966), especially

the presence of a nontraditional professional mother (Tangri, 1972); first born status (Hennig, 1977; Anderson, 1974; Cartwright. 1972; Fakouri, 1974; Gormly, 1968; Sutton-Smith & Rosenberg, 1970); absence of any male siblings (Hennig, 1974; Astin, 1969, 1967); Jewish or Unitarian upbringing (Karman, 1973); single marital status (Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Rossi, 1975; Astin 1969); and if married, few children (Astin, 1969, Manis & Hoffman, 1974; Baruch, 1976); b) education variables: support from a significant professor or other role models (Zinberg, 1974; Ruddick & Daniels, 1977; Carnegie Commission, 1973; Dunn & Dunn, 1977; Steinberg, 1976; Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Douvan, 1976); and c) employment variables: large number and variety of jobs (Almquist & Angrist, 1971; Angrist & Almquist, 1975); and the experience of a women's (support) group (Riger, 1974; Kirkpatrick, 1975; Holter, 1975).

The majority of these past studies, which attempt to correlate specific variables with nontraditional professional status, are based on career projections of high school, college and graduate student women, or responses from women in one professional field. However, there is evidence that career expectations are poor predictors of the actual careers of women as adults so that the predictive validity of background indicators from such studies is unknown (Angrist & Almquist, 1975; Mednick, Tangri & Hoffman, 1975). Because of these shortcomings in generalizability in the research literature, this

study is retrospective and examines the backgrounds of women who have actually become and remained professionals in various fields.

The purpose of this study then, is to explore the backgrounds and current lifestyles of women in several different traditional and nontraditional career fields and to determine if these backgrounds and current lifestyles differ substantially from normative expectations of women's behaviors in American culture. In addition, this study examines the validity of previous research findings by studying women who have already entered careers, rather than testing women who expect to go into careers as in most previous research.

## Method

### Subjects

The total sample included 309 women residing/employed in Colorado and Ohio. Women who were included in the membership of three main groups of careers were randomly chosen and sampled: 104 professionals with nontraditional careers (57 physicians who were members of the American Medical Women's Association Inc.; 47 registered lawyers); 124 professionals with traditional careers (64 home economists who were members of the Colorado or Ohio Home Economics Association; 60 registered public health nurses); and 81 homemakers (faculty wives and Jr. Women's club members who had at least some college education). All of the women sampled had at least completed

3 years of post high school education. These women ranged in age from 23 to 86 with a mean age of 41 years. This sample of 309 women constituted a 59% return rate.

Instruments

The questionnaire was developed by combining past research instruments with new ideas generated through a series of three pilot studies. In each pilot study, 15 Colorado women, five from each career category, responded to a cover letter and questionnaire in order to determine the clarity of the instrument and the time involved in responding. The researcher then met with each woman to discuss her answers and any problems she encountered regarding the instrument. Suggestions from each pilot were incorporated into a new version of the questionnaire until an instrument was developed which resulted in sufficient diversity and clarity in the questions to warrant being used in the full-scale study.

The three-part questionnaire, which took approximately 15-30 minutes to complete was designed to elicit information on the seven family, one education and two employment background variables reviewed in the literature as well as several previously untested background variables. The items in Part I, presented in Table 1, consisted of close-ended questions designed to elicit this personal background data.

Insert Table 1 about here

Part II[2], comprised of 42 5-point Likert type items, referred to self-perceived characteristic variables (e.g., intelligence, attractiveness, height, independence, confidence) associated with career-orientation. Part III, made up of six open-ended questions gave subjects an opportunity to elaborate on the information obtained in Parts I and II as well as add other information about factors which affected their professional development. These open-ended questions specifically concerned the influence of employment history, significant persons, significant experiences, membership in women's groups, personal characteristics and other factors generated by the subjects themselves, on career development.

Procedure

A letter personally addressed to each woman detailing the rationale and goals of the study, as well as offering the option to receive a copy of the results, was mailed along with the questionnaire and self-addressed stamped envelope to the 600 women (200/category; 300 in Colorado and 300 in Ohio) who were part of the mailed questionnaire sample. Each questionnaire had a numerical coding which was destroyed once the questionnaire was returned and all the data were computer recorded. The response rate for useable mailed questionnaires ranged from 37% to 58%, averaging a 48% return rate for mailed questionnaires.

In an attempt to assess the extent to which responders

were similar to nonresponders, 10% of the women who did not respond to the mailed questionnaire were randomly chosen and telephoned by the author. These women were asked to respond on the phone to a subset of the questions on the full questionnaire. These questions asked for demographic data, information relating to participation in women's groups, and commitment to marital/career situation. The response rate for brief phone questionnaires was 92%.

In order to assess the reliability of the questionnaire as an instrument, a subsample of 40 women living either in Denver, Boulder or Ft. Collins, Colorado or Columbus, Ohio were interviewed in person by the author. Twenty-five women/category were randomly chosen from the same membership lists as the mailed questionnaire sample to be personally interviewed instead of responding to the mailed questionnaire; however, the interview sample was chosen from the remaining names of women who were not selected for the mailed sample. The first 12-14 women accepting/category were interviewed. During these sessions, the author read the questionnaire to the subject and recorded the respondant's answer. The response rate for the interview questionnaires was 89%.

## Data Analysis

Chi square and Manova (multiple analysis of variance) comparisons were used to analyze the sample separately in terms of: 1) the five occupational groups of physicians,

lawyers, home economists, nurses and homemakers; 2) the three career categories of nontraditional career women, traditional career women and homemakers; 3) the four employed occupational groups of physicians, lawyers, home economists and nurses with the unemployed homemaker group; 4) physicians with lawyers; 5) home economists with nurses; and 6) the three types of responses, mailed questionnaires, brief phone interviews and longer face-to-face interviews in terms of the family, education and employment background variables found in Part I of the questionnaire.

A coding manual for the open ended questions in Part II was developed by the author. Answers to individual questions from samples of approximately 75-100 questionnaires were recorded. The list of responses was reviewed and categories of responses were prepared which were appropriate to both analytical aims and the nature of the responses themselves. To insure consistency of coding for the total sample, all responses designated to a specific numerical category were recorded in the coding manual. Two psychology students and the author coded 50 questionnaires to assess the reliability of the coding manual. Intercoder reliability for the coders was .82 (Spearman Rho). Once frequencies of responses for each item was computed, they were analyzed by chi square.

Manova comparisons were also used to analyze the sample separately in terms of the three types of responses (mailed

questionnaire, brief phone interview and longer face-to-face interview). None of the overall Manovas done on the subsets of questions the three instruments had in common were significant (.05) and only 5 out of the 41 (12%) individual variables tested resulted in any significant differences among the three response groups. This finding was used to justify pooling all of the data.

## Results

### Differences Among the Five Groups.

By far, most differences emerge from analyses comparing the five groups of women, as shown in Tables 2 and 3 which report the results of significant chi square and Manova comparisons among the five groups of women in terms of individual variables. Of the 41 comparisons made, 37% were significant when comparing the five professional groups of women and only 21% were significant when comparing the three career categories of women. The data from chi square comparisons are presented in Table 2 in terms of percentages of response; the data from Manovas are presented in Table 3 in terms of means and standard deviations. Only significant differences at the .05 level from the quantitative and qualitative statistical analyses will be presented here.

---

Insert Tables 2 and 3 about here

---

Physicians. Physicians' mothers were more likely than the other women's (except nurses) mothers to have been employed in a professional field, particularly in the nontraditional profession of medicine, $X^2(8)=20.58$, $p < .008$. Their fathers were also much more likely to have been professional, $X^2(12)=30.91$, $p < .002$. Qualitative data suggests that of all the women, physicians were significantly more often influenced by a positive family role model, $X^2(4)=17.16$, $p < .001$, and both parents typically offered encouragement for their daughter's career decisions.

As adults, physicians gave birth to their first child at an older age (over 30 years of age) than any of the other groups of women and were the most strongly committed to their present life combining marriage, childrearing and employment, $F(4,280)=4.34$, $p < .01$. Physicians' older age, $F(4,280)=20.19$, $p < .001$ may account for these differences. Qualitative data also suggests that physicians reported significantly more personal self-characteristics (e.g., intelligence perseverance) as having positively affected their career development, $X^2(4)=11.08$, $p < .05$, and recalled the most encouragement of all the women from educators who also served as positive role models.

Lawyers. Lawyers were much more likely to have been reared in Jewish or Catholic families, $X^2(8)=45.67$, $p < .0001$. Lawyers' fathers were more likely than the other women's fathers

to have also practiced law. Qualitative dats shows that only lawyers and homemakers reported experiencing negative family role models (e.g., their mothers). The data suggests that lawyers participated in and received significantly more support from women's (political) support groups than the other women, $F(1,263)=5.10$, $p < .025$. Also, like physicians, qualitative data suggests that lawyers experienced more encouragement from role models who were educators than traditional women or homemakers.

Home Economists. As children, home economists were more likely to have had fathers who were farmers. Qualitative data shows that home economists were the only group to report no regrets with their present marital/career situation. Discontinuing their education more often than all of the groups (at least 3 years), home economists earned their advanced degrees (masters and doctorates) at a somewhat older age than the other women sampled. Home economists have held the largest number of jobs after graduating from high school (over four), $F(4,291)=6.02$, $p < .001$. Of all the groups, home economists' qualitative responses suggest exposure to significantly more positive role models in their employment field, $X^2(4)=28$, $p < .001$, and to encouragement from nonrelatives such as friends or colleagues, $X^2(4)=16.4$, $p < .001$.

Nurses. Along with physicians, nurses' mothers were more likely to have been employed than the other women's

mothers; nurses' mothers were often professionals, sometimes nurses. Qualitative data shows that although nurses recalled positive family role models, of all the groups of women, nurses remembered the least encouragement for their career plans from family members.

Employed nurses were the most likely to be single, or to be married only for a short time, $X^2(8)=59.55$, $p < .0001$. Nurses did, however, report that they anticipate marriage and a break in their careers to raise children. Nurses' younger age may be the factor responsible for all of these differences. Qualitative data suggests that nurses' opinions of themselves and their career development are somewhat more ambivalent than the self-images of other women, reflecting both negative and positive personal self-characteristics. Nurses earned the smallest number of advanced degrees. Qualitative data suggests a trend of discouragement from educators which may have negatively influenced nurses' career plans.

Homemakers. Proportionally, the data show that more of the homemakers had mothers who were also full-time homemakers; and in addition, qualitative data show that homemakers and lawyers were the only women to recall employed mothers whom they did not want to emulate. Qualitative data suggest that homemakers recalled significantly more encouragement from relatives to become full-time homemakers, $X^2(4)=10.4$, $p < .05$, and significantly more discouragement from relatives for

considering employment outside of the home, $X^2(4)=48.6$, $p < .001$. Since high school and through college, homemakers have consistently been the most oriented towards marriage and children and are the most likely to remember always wanting to be full-time homemakers. The homemakers sampled have been married the longest (about 21 years) and have the most children (2-3), $F(4,280)=28.44$, $p < .0001$. In the open-ended questions, homemakers reported the largest number of regrets with their present life situations. In addition, qualitative data suggest that homemakers' self-image seemed the most negative since they referred to more negative than positive personal characteristics when describing their career development.

Homemakers have assumed the smallest number of jobs (3) since graduating from high school and were the women most likely to have left their jobs because of marriage and pregnancy. Qualitative data also suggested a trend difference for homemakers to perceive their participation in volunteer activities as having positively reinforced their career decisions as well as increased their leadership and employment abilities.

The Four Groups of Employed Professionals (physicians, lawyers, home economists, and nurses) vs. Homemakers

Contrary to expectations, relatively few significant differences emerged when comparing the four groups of professionals with homemakers. In general, qualitative data

suggest that the professionals more often recalled mothers and nonrelatives who were positive role models and recalled that positive encouragement from significant others was important to their career development. Since high school and throughout college, homemakers have consistently been the most oriented toward marriage and children, and were the most likely to remember always wanting to be full-time homemakers. Qualitative data suggest that homemakers seemed to be the most dissatisfied with their present situations, themselves and their opportunities for change, though homemakers do feel that voluntary participation in groups has been supportive of their considering employment.

Nontraditional vs. Traditional Career Women

Also not expected were the relatively few significant differences found when nontraditional career women (physicians and lawyers) were compared with the traditional career women (nurses and home economists). Nontraditional women were more likely to have been reared in a Jewish or Catholic family, $X^2(4)=29.53$, $p < .001$. Nontraditional women's mothers, though also probably homemakers, were somewhat more likely to have assumed employment in a nontraditional profession. Nontraditional women's fathers were significantly more likely to have been employed in the same field as their daughters, $X^2(6)=13.53$, $p < .035$.

More than the traditional women, nontraditional women have been oriented towards a nontraditional career throughout high

school and college and are more committed to their present marital/career situation, $F(1,280)=8.35$, $p < .004$. Qualitative data shows that whereas only nontraditional women recalled any positive school related role models, traditional women reported experiencing more encouragement and positive role models from employment related persons.

Within Career Categories

Physicians vs. Lawyers. As in the previous comparison, relatively few significant differences were found within the nontraditional category comparison relative to the five group comparison; the differences found between physicians and lawyers, however, were not anticipated and warrant discussion. Lawyers were more likely from Jewish families, $X^2(2)=6.88$, $p < .032$. Physicians had significantly more professional mothers, $X^2(2)=11.61$, $p < .003$ and professional fathers, $X^2(3)=8.30$, $p < .040$ than lawyers, who served as positive role models for their daughters. Lawyers on the other hand, were more likely to have perceived their employed mothers as negative role models.

These employed physicians were more likely to be married, have more children and to be more committed to their marital/career situations than lawyers. Lawyers, however, more often discontinued their education or their employment for children, family or pregnancy. Qualitative data suggest that physicians attributed more of their own personal characteristics as

having positively influenced their careers.

Physicians' employment and education patterns reflected a more steady commitment and progression towards their specific careers. Lawyers, although nontraditionally career oriented, did not have a specific career in mind and were more likely than doctors to have been positively influenced by their experiences in all women's (political) support groups.

Home economists vs. Nurses. Also unexpected was that the two subgroups of traditional women sampled differed significantly in their backgrounds and present lives. Whereas five nurses had mothers in the same occupational field, no home economists had mothers in their same field. Their fathers had significantly different employment histories, $X^2(3)=11.62$, $p < .009$; home economists' fathers were more likely to have been farmers; nurses' fathers to have been in a wide variety of occupations. As adults, home economists, especially those women who earned advanced degrees, reported in the open-ended questions significantly more encouragement from relatives and nonrelatives for their career development, $X^2(1)=5.4$, $p < 0.25$.

These employed home economists were likely to have earned advanced degrees, to be married and to be more committed to their present marital/career situations than nurses.

## Discussion

The descriptions of the five groups of women suggest several predominant findings. Most obvious and consistent,

is the finding that more significant differences resulted when comparing the five professional groups, physicians, lawyers, home economists, nurses and homemakers than the three career categories, nontraditional, traditional and homemaking, or professionals with homemakers, or nontraditional women with traditional women. This finding, that the backgrounds and present lives of women who enter nontraditional careers are not that different from women who enter traditional or homemaking careers and are therefore not significantly different from traditional sex-role norms, was unexpected. For example, physicians and lawyers, like the other women sampled, were integrating career and marriage; they were also similar in terms of birth order and employment during high school. The data suggested that the nontraditional women sampled do not perceive themselves as violating normative expectations of women in American society. Nontraditional women, particularly physicians, is the group most committed to their present life/career situations. These results indicated that the nontraditional career women, physicians and lawyers, were significantly different from other women and traditional sex-role norms only in terms of their present nontraditional employment position, but were not significantly different in terms of their present lifestyle or background.

The findings that physicians are significantly different from lawyers and that home economists are significantly different from nurses on several background variables, was also

not anticipated from previous research findings, which assumed similarity in background and used measures of expectation to study women by their nontraditional, traditional or homemaking orientation.

In terms of the specific variables tested, the most salient finding seemed to be that the presence of both positive role models and encouragement throughout the woman's life was important to nontraditional career development, particularly for physicians. The data suggested that exposure to and support from women in various instrumental roles throughout women's lives seemed to expand perceptions of behavior appropriate for them.

Another important area distinguishing the women seems to reflect their attitudes about themselves. The data also suggested that specific background factors, like mother's employment, may be less salient in women's career choices than how they experienced these conditions. For example, both nontraditional women and homemakers reported being reared with mothers who were employed in nontraditional fields. However, in Part III the open-ended section discussing significant persons in the woman's life, different reactions to the same situation were reported. Whereas physicians were proud of their mothers and emulated their lives, homemakers resented their mothers and wanted to be different from their own mothers. Some old variables such as birth order and employment background as well as several new variables such as

societal issues and financial situations only suggested trend differences among the groups and therefore were not discussed in this article but warrant further research.

In addition to the content issues considered, several methodological issues were raised in this study. The samples were not matched on variables like education and age. Although education was taken into consideration by requiring that all women sampled must have completed at least 3 years of post high school education, it is impossible to control for educational background when sampling women in various professions. Age, on the other hand, could possibly account for a few of the differences found such as the difference in marital status between nurses and the others. Whereas one might guess that age could affect commitment to present marital/career situation, the two oldest groups, physicians and homemakers, were opposite in terms of their present commitments. Physicians were the most strongly committed to their present situation; homemakers expressed the most regrets with their present situation. The majority of variables tested such as religious background, father's and mother's occupation, or support from parents would not have been affected by the subject's age. Future studies however should try to control for the subjects' age to rule out the possibility of confounding results.

The retrospective technique used in this study may be largely responsible for differences between the present findings and findings from the largely prospective studies of past

research in the field. Although problems also exist with retrospective studies, like faulty memories, the finding that the three different methods of collecting the data, mailed questionnaire, brief phone interview and longer face-to-face interview largely yielded paralled results, suggest that the results obtained from the retrospective study are reliable. Results from the brief phone interview also demonstrated that nonresponders were similar to the responders studied. Even with this support for the reliability of the data, one cannot be sure that particular differences found may not be due to chance or artifact. However, this is an exploratory study designed to help focus future research rather than a study designed to produce definitive conclusions. This is a first large scale study using retrospective data and it does suggest enough difference to warrant more detailed targeted studies.

Qualitative data from the open-ended questions provided some new insights to the information collected in the quantative section. For example, women's different reactions to their employed or nonemployed mothers only emerged in the qualitative data. The responses to the open-ended questions also generated some variables which seem better able to distinguish the various groups of women, e.g., the importance of volunteer participation for homemakers' career development, and the importance of one's own characteristics. Although the analysis of these subjective responses is more difficult than the analysis of the objective computer codeable data, the qualitative exploratory

information they provide warrant their inclusion in future studies.

These findings suggest that for the women in this sample, their careers are influenced mainly by specific background variables which bear little relation to career sex-typing as such. Similarly, there is little relation between traditional or nontraditional life-styles and the choice of profession. For example, although medicine is traditionally a "male" profession in this culture, the physicians in this sample seemed comfortable with traditional female roles in their daily lives and report backgrounds that show high conformity to cultural values for women. To gain a better understanding of career choices it seems important to compare the kind of data obtained here with similar data from male professionals to examine if particular professions "pull" people with particular backgrounds regardless of sex. In addition, when studying groups of women, this research suggests that future research should continue to study women from various professional fields in various parts of the country who could be grouped in their specific professional field as well as their nontraditional, traditional or homemaking category. Longitudinal studies are also needed to follow people, particularly women, from the social and psychological precursors of their choices through to their actual choices and their careers.

References

Almquist, E. M., & Angrist, S. S. Role model influences on college women's career aspirations. In A. Theodore (Ed.), The professional woman, 1971, pp. 301-323.

Anderson, J. V. Psychological determinants. In R. B. Kundsin (Ed.), Women and success, 1974, pp. 200-207.

Angrist, S. A., & Almquist, E. M. Careers and contingencies. Cambridge, Mass.: University Press of Cambridge, Mass., 1975.

Astin, H. S. Factors associated with the participation of women doctorates in the labor force. Personnel and Guidance Journal, 1967, 46, 240-245.

Astin, H. S. The woman doctorate in America: Origins, career and family. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1969.

Baruch, G. Girls who perceive themselves as competent: Some antecedents and correlates. Psychology of Women Quarterly, Fall 1976, 1, 38-49.

Carnegie Commission. Opportunities for women in higher education. Berkeley: McGraw-Hill, 1973.

Cartwright, L. K. Conscious factors entering into decisions of women to study medicine. Journal of Social Issues, 1972, 28, #2, 201-217.

Douvan, E. The role of models in women's professional development. Psychology of Women Quarterly, Fall 1976, 1, 5-21.

Dunn, R., & Dunn, K. How to raise independent and professionally successful daughters. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977.

Epstein, C. F. Woman's place. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

Fakouri, M. E. Relationships of birth order, dogmatism and achievement motivation. Journal of Individual Psychology, 1974, 30, #2, 216-220.

Freeman, J. The politics of women's liberation: A case study of an emerging social movement and its relation to the policy process. New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1975.

Ginzberg, E. Life styles of educated women. New York: Columbia University Press, 1966.

Gormly, R. Birth order, family size, and psychological masculinity-femininity. Proceedings of the 76th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, 1968, 3, 165.

Helson, R. The changing image of the career woman. Journal of Social Issues, 1972, 28, (2), 33-46.

Hennig, M., & Jardim, A. The managerial woman. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977.

Hoffman, L. W. Early childhood experiences and women's achievement motives. Journal of Social Issues, 1972, 187-205.

Holter, H. Sex roles and social change. In M. Mednick, S. Tangri and L. Hoffman (Eds.), Women and achievement--social and motivational analyses, 1975, 6-20.

Karman, F. J. Women: Personal and environmental factors in role identification and career choices. California University, Los Angeles, Center for the Study of Evaluation, 1973, ERIC, ED 084 383.

Kirkpatrick, M. J. A report on a consciousness raising group for women psychiatrists. Journal of the American Medical Women's Association, 1975, May, 306, 206-212.

Kundsin, R. B. (Ed.) Women and success: The anatomy of achievement. New York: Williams Morrow and Co., Inc., 1974.

Lovett, S. L. Personality characteristics and antecedent of vocational choice of graduate women students in science research. Dissertation Abstracts, 1969, 29, (12-A), 4287-4288.

Lozoff, M. Fathers and autonomy in women. In R. B. Kundsin (Ed.) Women and success, 1974, 103-109.

Manis, J. D., & Hoffman, L. W. Fertility motivations and career conflicts in educated women. In D. G. McGuigan (Ed.), New Research on women at the University of Michigan, 1974, pp. 128-130.

Mednick, M. T., Tangri, S. S., & Hoffman, L. W. Women and achievement--social and motivational analyses. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1975.

Riger, S. The effects of participation in women's consciousness-raising groups, report of research in progress. In D. G. McGuigan (Ed.), New research on women at the University of Michigan, 1974, pp. 113-115.

Rossi, A. S. Barriers to the career choice of engineering medicine, or science among American women. In J. A. Mattfeld and C. G. Van Aken (Eds.), Women and the scientific professions, 1975, 51-127.

Ruddick, S. & Daniels, P. (Eds.) Working it out: 23 women writers, artists, scientists, and scholars talk about their lives and work. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.

Steinberg, J. A. The perceptions of professional women as deviants. Unpublished Generals paper in the clinical psychology department, Ohio State University, Columbus, 1976.

Sutton-Smith, B., & Rosenberg, B. G. The sibling. New York, Chicago: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc., 1970.

Tangri, S. S. Determinants of occupational role innovation among college women. Journal of Social Issues, 1972, 28, #2, 177-201.

Theodore, A. (Ed.) The professional woman. Cambridge, Mass: Schenkman Publishing Co., Inc., 1971.

Wolman, C., & Frank, H. Solo woman in a professional peer group. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1975, 45, #1, 164-171.

Zinberg, D. College: When the future becomes the present. In R. B. Kundsin (Ed.), Women and success, 1974, 129-138.

## Footnotes

[1]This study is based on data collected in a larger study exploring several other background variables.

[2]This self-perception data and analysis is not discussed in this presentation; it is part of the larger study.

Table 1

Background Inventory Variables: Part I

| Category | Individual Variables |
|---|---|
| Family Background Variables | Parents' Age |
| | Parents' Marital Status |
| | Parents' Occupations and Educational Attainment |
| | Subjects' Birth Order |
| | Other persons living with family when subject was growing up |
| | Religious Background |
| | Race/Ethnic Group or Nationality |
| | Subjects' Marital Status-also includes number of children, close supportive relationships, and commitment to present marital/career situation |
| Education and General Background Variables | Highest degree attained: when earned; how long it took to earn; if the subject ever discontinued her education, how long and why |
| | Age |
| | Height |
| | Weight |
| | High school, college and post-college grade pt. average |

Table 1 (cont.)

| Category | Individual Variables |
|---|---|
| | College major |
| | How financed education |
| | Hobbies as a child and presently |
| | Age of first date |
| | Organizations was a member of during high school, college, post-college and presently |
| Employment Background Variables | Present employment-position and time employed with this employer |
| | Past jobs-position, dates employed, reason for leaving |

Table 2

Background Variables of Professional Women: Percentages and Chi Square Results of Five Professional Groups by Individual Background Variables

| Variable | Response Categories | Nontraditional Women | | Traditional Women | | Homemakers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Physicians | Lawyers | Home Economists | Nurses | Homemakers |
| Mother's occupation when the subject was 5-18 years old | Homemaker | 63 | 62 | 66 | 47 | 69** |
| | Professional | 21 | 2 | 9 | 22 | 8 |
| | Nonprofessional/ other | 15 | 36 | 25 | 30 | 23 |
| Father's occupation when the subject was younger than 5 years old | Professional | 49 | 36 | 28 | 34 | 31** |
| | Farmer | 13 | 6 | 36 | 13 | 19 |
| | Manager/ administrator | 9 | 23 | 5 | 11 | 15 |
| | Other | 29 | 34 | 31 | 43 | 35 |

Table 2 (cont.)

| Variable | Response Categories | Nontraditional Women: Physicians | Nontraditional Women: Lawyers | Traditional Women: Home Economists | Traditional Women: Nurses | Homemakers: Homemakers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Religious Background | Jewish | 13 | 30 | 5 | 3 | 2**** |
| | Catholic | 22 | 28 | 9 | 25 | 21 |
| | Protestant | 65 | 41 | 86 | 71 | 77 |
| Marital Status | Married | 70 | 57 | 48 | 41 | 91**** |
| | Single | 12 | 32 | 35 | 46 | 1 |
| | Divorced, separated or widowed | 18 | 11 | 17 | 14 | 7 |
| Significant Persons--Relative-positive role model | Reported | 34 | 15 | 19 | 22 | 20*** |
| | Did not report | 66 | 85 | 11 | 79 | 80 |

Table 2 (cont.)

| Variable | Response Categories | Nontraditional Women: Physicians | Nontraditional Women: Lawyers | Traditional Women: Home Economists | Traditional Women: Nurses | Homemakers: Homemakers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nonrelative-infield-positive role model | Reported | 10 | 10 | 32 | 13 | 0*** |
| | Did not report | 90 | 90 | 68 | 87 | 100 |
| Relative-positive support, encouragement | Reported | 78 | 83 | 81 | 48 | 1* |
| | Did not report | 22 | 17 | 19 | 52 | 99 |
| Relative-discouragement | Reported | 14 | 60 | 14 | 31 | 93*** |
| | Did not report | 86 | 40 | 86 | 69 | 7 |

Table 2 (cont.)

| Variable | Response Categories | Nontraditional Women: Physicians | Nontraditional Women: Lawyers | Traditional Women: Home Economists | Traditional Women: Nurses | Homemakers: Homemakers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nonrelative-positive encouragement, support | Reported | 74 | 50 | 16 | 35 | 44*** |
| | Did not report | 26 | 50 | 84 | 65 | 56 |
| Subject's Personal Characteristics | | | | | | |
| Positively influenced career development | Reported | 44 | 25 | 31 | 19 | 11* |
| | Did not report | 56 | 75 | 69 | 81 | 89 |

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001 ****p < .0001

Table 3

Background Variables of Professional Women: Means, Standard Deviations and Manova Results of Five Professional Groups by Individual Background Variables

| | | Nontraditional Women | | Traditional Women | | Homemakers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variable | | Physicians | Lawyers | Home Economists | Nurses | Homemakers |
| Commitment to present marital/ career situation 1=weakest 5=strongest | M | 4.92 | 4.42 | 4.38 | 4.00 | 4.23** |
| | S. D. | 1.25 | .84 | 1.31 | 1.03 | 1.36 |
| Age (Years) | M | 50.96 | 36.21 | 41.63 | 31.37 | 45.93*** |
| | S. D. | 14.56 | 11.08 | 13.38 | 8.51 | 14.74 |
| No. jobs after high school | M | 3.91 | 4.00 | 4.37 | 3.86 | 2.93*** |
| | S. D. | 2.25 | 2.06 | 1.96 | 1.73 | 1.74 |
| No. children subject has 0=none | M | 1.82 | 1.30 | .85 | .50 | 2.62*** |
| | S. D. | 1.74 | 1.49 | 1.18 | .90 | 1.20 |

Table 3 (cont.)

| Variable | | Nontraditional Women | | Traditional Women | | Homemakers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Physicians | Lawyers | Home Economists | Nurses | Homemakers |
| Women's (political) support groups | M | -.15 | .79 | .10 | -.17 | -.27* |
| | S. D. | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.09 | 1.03 | .65 |

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001